

WOMEN'S ARMY AUXILIARY CORPS

MAY 11, 1942.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. AUSTIN, from the Committee on Military Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 6293]

The Committee on Military Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 6293) to establish a Women's Army Auxiliary Corps for service with the Army of the United States, having considered the same, together with a Senate-approved amendment offered on behalf of Mr. Barbour, an amendment offered by Mr. Thomas of Utah, and certain amendments intended to be proposed by Mr. Hughes, and by Mr. Johnson of Colorado, submit the following report thereon, with the recommendation that the bill (H. R. 6293) in the form it passed the House of Representatives do pass without amendment.

H. R. 6293 is substantially identical with S. 2240, which was reported favorably by this committee in its report No. 1051 dated February 7, 1942, except that H. R. 6293 now contains a provision that the total strength of the corps shall not exceed 150,000 whereas S. 2240 contained no such limitation.

The purpose and effect of this bill are fully explained in Report No. 1705 of the Committee on Military Affairs of the House of Representatives which follows:

The Committee on Military Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 6293) to establish a Women's Army Auxiliary Corps for service with the Army of the United States, having considered the same, submit the following report thereon, with the recommendation that it do pass.

The purpose of this legislation is to authorize the President to establish and organize, in such units as he may from time to time determine to be necessary, a Women's Army Auxiliary Corps for noncombatant service with the Army and thus make available to the national defense, when needed, the knowledge, skill, and special training of the women of this Nation.

At the present time there is adequate manpower in this country to meet requirements for purely military purposes. However, there are a great many types of noncombatant service in the Military Establishment, particularly in the Aircraft Warning Service of the Army, which women can perform better than men. There are thousands of qualified women who are willing and eager to perform these duties. They cannot be so employed with a maximum benefit to the national

defense without proper organization, training, and control under military supervision. This bill provides a means whereby the necessary organization, training, and control can be perfected and exercised in an efficient and orderly manner.

The proposed organization would operate under the direct supervision of the Army and would not conflict with or replace civilian defense activities. It would include only women citizens of the United States who volunteer for appointment or enrollment in the corps. The term of service is 1 year, which may be extended for the duration of the war plus 6 months. Age limits for officer personnel of the corps are such as may be prescribed by regulations. The age limits for enrollees are fixed in the bill as 21 to 45 years. There would be one director (a member of the corps) charged with the administration and operation of the corps under the supervision of the Chief of Staff of the Army; such assistant directors as may be necessary, probably one per corps area; an appropriate number of first, second, and third officers, leaders, and auxiliaries to form, administer, and train the companies, platoons, and similar units. A company, which is the largest unit now contemplated, would normally be stationed at a large camp or other military installation including information centers of the Aircraft Warning Service. The type of duty to which personnel of the corps could be assigned is not specified in the bill except that it must be limited to noncombatant service. Existing requirements indicate that assignments may include the following: Clerks, machine operators, telephone, telegraph, teletype, and switchboard operators, pharmacists, dietitians, hostesses, librarians, theater employees, welfare workers, post exchange employees, plotters, tellers, supervisors in information and filter centers, cooks, stewardesses, laundry workers, and messengers.

The Aircraft Warning Service of the Army now employs some 6,000 women, on duties such as enumerated above, in its information and filter centers. They are at present unpaid volunteers who are rendering excellent service as a patriotic duty, but through no fault of the individuals concerned this volunteer system as such is not satisfactory for military purposes in time of war. The information and filter centers are highly organized installations, a large part of which can be operated better by women than men, but in time of war it is essential that irregular attendance and excessive turn-over in personnel be eliminated by subjecting all such personnel to strict military supervision and control.

Under the provisions of the bill the units and total strength of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps would be limited by the President. Within such limitations the Secretary of War could appoint and enroll personnel and distribute them within the authorized grades. The corps would not be a part of the Army, but the grades of director, assistant director, and first, second, and third officers would correspond generally to those of major, captain, first lieutenant, and second lieutenant, respectively, in the Army. The grades of first leader, leader, junior leader, and auxiliary correspond to those of staff sergeant, sergeant, corporal, and private, respectively. The pay and allowances of members of the corps are generally those authorized for corresponding grades in the Army. An appropriate uniform will be prescribed and issued to each member. Benefits other than active-duty pay and allowances are those now provided for Government employees and would be administered by the United States Employees' Compensation Commission.

The committee unanimously recommend enactment of H. R. 6293.

This bill, H. R. 6293, is substantially the same as H. R. 4906, amended by the author in accordance with recommendations from all concerned. A letter from the Chief of Staff of the Army and a War Department report on H. R. 4906 follow:

DEAR MR. MAY: Urgent military business renders it impossible for me personally to present to your committee my recommendations regarding pending legislation to authorize a Women's Army Auxiliary Corps.

In my opinion this proposed organization would provide a sound and practicable method for meeting military requirements with respect to the employment of women. The percentage of our people employed in essential war industry is steadily increasing and I think it can be assumed that all of our available manpower and womanpower will be required, either in uniform or industry, to win this war. There are innumerable duties now being performed by soldiers that actually can be done better by women. Timely recognition of this situation and legislative action which will enable the military establishment to absorb and utilize its proportionate share of the available womanpower will contribute materially to the successful accomplishment of the task before us.

The efficient use of women for noncombatant service with the Army requires systematic organization and training of this personnel under military super-

vision and control. In order that the available means may be applied to meet the existing military needs I earnestly request that your committee support the legislation now being considered to establish a Women's Army Auxiliary Corps.

Faithfully yours,

G. C. MARSHALL,
Chief of Staff.

DECEMBER 24, 1941.

HON. ANDREW J. MAY,
*Chairman, Committee on Military Affairs,
House of Representatives.*

DEAR MR. MAY: The War Department recommends the enactment, with certain amendments indicated hereinafter, of H. R. 4906, Seventy-seventh Congress, a bill to establish a Women's Army Auxiliary Corps for service with the Army of the United States.

The bill provides for a volunteer corps of women for noncombatant service with the Army. A similar force is being used in England at the present time and experience both in this war and during the World War has demonstrated that such an organization will provide a practical means for utilizing the services of women where they can be of great assistance in national defense. At the present time there is no shortage of manpower in this country; nevertheless there are a great many types of duty in corps area service commands and in the Aircraft Warning Service for which women are better fitted than men, and the employment of women on such duty would increase efficiency and release men for more intensive work or combat service.

In order that a maximum benefit might be obtained from the proposed auxiliary corps it is essential that its organization and employment be carefully planned and key personnel properly trained before there is urgent need for extensive expansion. This bill provides a means whereby the organization could be perfected in an efficient and orderly manner on a small scale initially and expanded thereafter if required by the situation.

The organization contemplated by this legislation would not replace or conflict with any functions or activities now under the supervision of the Office of Civilian Defense. Under the provisions of this bill the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps would consist of individuals and units substantially as follows: One director charged with the administration and operation of the corps under the direction of the Chief of Staff of the Army; such assistant directors as may be necessary, probably one per corps area service command; one or more schools for training candidates for officers of the corps; and such number of first, second, and third officers, leaders, and auxiliaries as may be necessary to form initially a limited number of companies. A company would normally be stationed at a large post, camp, station, or other zone of interior installation and its personnel given such assignments as clerks, machine operators, cooks and bakers, stewardesses, telephone and telegraph operators, pharmacists, dietitians, hygienists, hospital and laboratory technicians, hostesses, librarians, theater employees, welfare workers, post exchange employees, and laundry workers.

The proposed organization would include an aircraft warning section as a component part of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps. At present aircraft plotting units, military organizations, require a relatively large number of women volunteers to assist in the operation of filter centers and information centers. These volunteers perform such duties as clerks, plotters, supervisors, teletype, telegraph, switchboard and telephone operators, and messengers. They are procured through the Office of Civilian Defense, but their organization, training, and service is under military supervision. Approximately 9,700 women would be required to provide a full complement for all filter and information centers of the 28 regions within the United States. Filter and information centers are highly organized installations which cannot function properly with part of the operating personnel absent. The voluntary service of women operators has been satisfactory except for the matter of attendance, over which military authorities now exercise no control. If this bill is enacted it is proposed to enroll qualified members of this volunteer group who so desire, together with such replacements and additional personnel as may be necessary, in the aircraft warning section of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps. The complete operating force of each filter and information center would then consist of military personnel and members of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, thus providing an organization entirely under military control. The auxiliary component would not be required at all times but could be called to active duty for training or service when necessary.

The size of this proposed organization will depend upon military requirements and cannot be determined at the present time. It is therefore believed that H. R. 4906 should be amended so as to provide a corps with a total strength not in excess of the number authorized from time to time by the President and permit the distribution of personnel by the Secretary of War in the several grades authorized in the bill. A number of changes to facilitate administration have been recommended by the United States Employees' Compensation Commission and are concurred in by the War Department. Sections 15 and 16, as now worded, are believed to be unnecessary, as their purpose can be fully accomplished under provisions appearing elsewhere in the bill.

There is attached hereto a proposed revision of H. R. 4906 showing the changes which are believed advisable and it is recommended that the bill, amended as indicated, be enacted into law.

The additional cost of this legislation cannot be determined at this time. It is estimated at approximately \$3,000,000 for the fiscal year 1942 and will probably be less than a military organization of the same size.

The Bureau of the Budget advises that there is no objection to the submission of this revised draft to the Congress for its consideration.

Sincerely yours,

HENRY L. STIMSON,
Secretary of War.

The amendment offered by Mr. Thomas of Utah would authorize a Women's Army Auxiliary Corps as a section of the Enlisted Reserve Corps of the Army and provides that this corps shall be officered by women appointed and commissioned as officers in the Army of the United States under the provisions of the act of September 22, 1941 (Public Law 252, 77th Cong.). Under the provisions of the amendment the personnel of the Corps would be enlisted or commissioned in the Army of the United States as distinguished from enrolled or appointed in a corps for duty with the Army, and thereafter they would be subject automatically to all the laws and regulations applicable to the Army. As enlisted or commissioned personnel of the Army they would receive the pay, allowances, and benefits now or hereafter authorized for such enlisted or commissioned personnel.

The War Department and this committee consider it essential that the organization of this proposed corps be authorized and initiated at the earliest practicable date. As a part of the Army the corps would be organized and employed to accomplish identically the same mission as that contemplated and provided for in this bill. The proposed amendment is therefore acceptable to the War Department if, in the opinion of the Congress, that method is deemed preferable. However, as commissioned and enlisted personnel these women would be subject to military law, discipline, and control to a greater extent than necessary to accomplish their mission. It is the considered opinion of this committee that the organization provided for in H. R. 6293 is adequate for the purpose, and should be authorized.

The amendment offered on behalf of Mr. Barbour and those intended to be proposed by Mr. Johnson of Colorado, and Mr. Hughes, are substantially the same. Each provides that in the enrollment and appointment of women under this bill, and in the interpretation and execution of the provisions thereof, there shall be no discrimination against any person on account of race or color. The bill, as now worded, does not discriminate against any person. The War Department has stated that this corps, if authorized, will include Negro units and the record of that Department with respect to the employment of Negroes in and with the Army does not justify an assumption that such discrimination will be exercised in the administration of the law.